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Department of State TELEGRAM

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SS 20,GPM 03,SC 01,NSC 10,RSC 01,L 03,H 02,SAH 03,P 04,INR 07,
AID 30,RSR 01,/107 W

P R 241300Z OCT 67
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9542
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 4737
CINCPAC
AMCONSUL DANANG 1241
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE 2906

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 9442

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

SUBJ: LOWER HOUSE ELECTIONS: YOUNGEST CANDIDATE WINS ON REFORM PLATFORM, USING DOVE SYMBOL

REF: A) SAIGON 7617; B) SAIGON 9257

1. THIS REPORTS ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON DUONG VAN BA,

WHO AT 25 WAS THE YOUNGEST CANDIDATE TO WIN A SEAT IN THE LOWER HOUSE. AS REPORTED REFTELS, BA IS A SCHOOL-TEACHER FROM BAC LIEU WHO RAN ON A REFORM TICKET. WE HAVE SUBSEQUENTLY LEARNED THAT HE EMPLOYED THE DOVE (WITH OLIVE BRANCE) AS HIS CAMPAIGN SYMBOL. HE IS THE ONLY WINNER WE KNOW OF SO FAR WHO HAS DONE SO.

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2. BA'S PRO-PEACE AND ANTI-GOVERNMENT CAMPAIGN WAS CLEARLY AIMED AT THE YOUNG. HIS CAMPAIGN POSTERS AND LEAFLETS ADVOCATED "DE-ESCALATING THE FIGHTING IN ORDER TO END THE WAR QUICKLY". HE DESCRIBED THOSE WHO HAVE REPRESENTED THE PEOPLE IN THE PAST AS UNAWARE OF THE PEOPLES' NEEDS AND INCOMPETENT. HE ASSERTED THAT "YOUTH SHOULD NOT BE SLAVES TO THE GOVERNMENT," THAT HE HAD NOT BEEN CHOSEN AS THE GOVERNMENT-ENDORSED CANDIDATE AND THUS WAS FREE OF TAINT OF WINNING BEFORE BALLOTS WERE CAST.
3. BA WON BY A SOLID MARGIN OF ALMOST TWO TO ONE.
4. BA, A BUDDHIST, WAS BORN APRIL 9, 1942 IN BAC LIEU. HE STUDIED PHILOSOPHY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DALAT AND HAS TAUGHT IN DALAT AND MY THO. BA CURRENTLY TEACHES

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AT A HIGH SCHOOL IN BAC LIEU. HE REPRESENTED IV CORPS YOUTH AT INTERNATIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCES IN THAILAND AND NEW DELHI IN 1966 AND EARLIER THIS YEAR. BA HAS BEEN ACTIVE IN VARIOUS SOUTHERN REGIONALIST CAUSES SUCH AS WHAT HE TERMS THE "STRUGGLE TO FOUND A UNIVERSITY IN CAN THO," EDITORSHIP OF NEWSPAPERS "VOICE OF THE WESTERN REGION" (TIENG GOI MIEN TAY) AND "SPREAD THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE OF THE WESTERN REGION" (PHAT HUY TIENG NOI CUA NHAN DAN MIEN TAY), SINCE CLOSED. BA WAS BAC LIEU REPRESENTATIVE FOR TRAN VAN HUONG IN PRESIDENTIAL RACE AND IS ASSOCIATED WITH, AND PROBABLY A MEMBER OF, THE MOVEMENT FOR THE RENAISSANCE OF THE SOUTH.
5. IN FIRST BRIEF CONTACTS WITH EMBOFF BA DID NOT LEAVE IMPRESSION OF ANTI-AMERICANISM OR PRO-COMMUNIST BELIEFS. HIS RATHER SEEMS A VOICE OF YOUTHFUL IMPATIENCE AND IDEALISM. BUNKER

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